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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
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Fifty-first session

ACTION TAKEN ON DECISIONS AND CONCLUSIONS OF
THE FIFTIETH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This reference document provides, in summary form, information on the follow-up by UNHCR on decisions/conclusions of the fiftieth session of the Executive Committee calling for follow-up by the High Commissioner. The paragraphs quoted below correspond to those contained in the report of the fiftieth session of the Executive Committee (A/AC.96/928). Decisions or conclusions requiring action by Governments or entities, other than the High Commissioner, are not reported on. Documents containing relevant information have been cross-referenced, in order to limit the length of the report.

II. INFORMATION ON FOLLOW-UP

para. 20 General Conclusion on International Protection

(c) *Reaffirms* its Conclusion No. 85 (XLIX), para (o), committing itself to uphold the principle of international solidarity and burden-sharing; expresses strong appreciation for instances where those principles were put into concrete action during the past year; and further *encourages* States and UNHCR to continue their efforts to give wider effect to these important principles;

UNHCR action. See: *Note on International Protection* (A/AC.96/930, Section III-E), presented to the eighteenth meeting of the Standing Committee (July 2000); and *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (E/2000/18), presented to the 2000 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(d) *Recognizes* that the presence of massive refugee populations in urban and rural areas in developing countries puts considerable strain on the economy and environment of these countries, and that increased attention should be paid to alleviate this negative impact; and calls on UNHCR to play

its catalytic role to mobilize assistance from the international community to address environmental degradation in refugee-hosting areas as well as the economic and social impact of large-scale refugee populations;

UNHCR action. See: Mainstreaming Environmental Concerns in Refugee Operations (EC/50/SC/CRP.9), presented to the seventeenth meeting of the Standing Committee (February/March 2000); Social and Economic Impact of Massive Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries, as well as other Countries (EC/50/SC/CRP.21); presented to the eighteenth meeting of the Standing Committee (July 2000); and Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (E/2000/18), presented to the 2000 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(e) Welcomes the accession of Georgia and Kazakhstan to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, bringing to 138 the number of States parties to one or both of these instruments; and encourages UNHCR and States to strengthen their efforts to promote broader accession to these instruments and full implementation of them;

UNHCR action. See: Note on International Protection (A/AC.96/930, Section III-B), presented to the eighteenth meeting of the Standing Committee (July 2000); and Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (E/2000/18), presented to the 2000 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(f) Reaffirms that the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol remain the foundation of the international refugee regime; recognizes, however, that there may be a need to develop complementary forms of protection, and in this context, encourages UNHCR to engage in consultations with States and relevant actors to examine all aspects of this issue;

UNHCR action. See: Note on International Protection (A/AC.96/930) and Complementary Forms of Protection: their Nature and Relationship to the International Refugee Protection Regime (EC/50/SC/CRP.18), presented to the eighteenth meeting of the Standing Committee (July 2000).

(h) Notes that the 50th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions on the law of armed conflict is being commemorated this year; calls on States and other parties to armed conflicts scrupulously to observe international humanitarian law; and also calls on UNHCR to strengthen further its collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies;

(i) Notes that the 30th anniversary of the OAU Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa is also being commemorated this year; acknowledges the contribution made by this Convention to the development of regional standards for the protection of refugees; and encourages UNHCR to continue its close collaboration with the Organization of African Unity with a view to enhancing the protection of refugees in Africa;

UNHCR action. See: Note on International Protection (A/AC.96/930), presented to the eighteenth meeting of the Standing Committee (July 2000); and Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (E/2000/18), presented to the 2000 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(l) *Reaffirms* Conclusion No. 58 (XL) on irregular movements; *notes* with concern that refugees who have already found and continue to enjoy protection in a first country of asylum continue to move in an irregular manner to other countries on a significant scale; and *encourages* UNHCR, States and other relevant actors to enhance cooperation to address the causes of such movements, in particular with a view to ensuring treatment of asylum-seekers and refugees in accordance with the highest possible standards of protection in first countries of asylum, and to creating awareness as to the risks and dangers linked to irregular movements, notably exploitation by traffickers; and further *encourages* UNHCR to work with transit and destination countries to ensure that the protection and assistance needs of such asylum-seekers and refugees are met;

UNHCR action. See: *Note on International Protection (A/AC.96/930) and Interception of Asylum-Seekers and Refugees: the International Framework and Recommendations for a Comprehensive Approach (EC/50/SC/CRP.17)*, presented to the eighteenth meeting of the Standing Committee (July 2000).

(m) *Recalls* Conclusion No. 15 (XXX) relating to refugees without an asylum country, Conclusion No. 30 (XXXIV) on the problem of manifestly unfounded or abusive applications for refugee status or asylum, and Conclusion No. 58 (XL) on the problem of refugees and asylum-seekers who move in an irregular manner from a country in which they had already found protection; and *invites* UNHCR to continue to study the issues arising from the concept of manifestly unfounded claims and to report to this Committee in due course;

(n) *Notes* with appreciation special efforts by States to incorporate gender perspectives into asylum policies, regulations and practices; *encourages* States, UNHCR and other concerned actors to promote wider acceptance, and inclusion in their protection criteria of the notion that persecution may be gender-related or effected through sexual violence; further *encourages* UNHCR and other concerned actors to develop, promote and implement guidelines, codes of conduct and training programmes on gender-related refugee issues, in order to support the mainstreaming of a gender perspective and enhance accountability for the implementation of gender policies;

UNHCR action. See: *Note on International Protection (A/AC.96/930)*, presented to the eighteenth meeting of the Standing Committee (July 2000); and *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (E/2000/18)*, presented to the 2000 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(p) Taking into account that elderly refugees are particularly affected by social disintegration, chronic dependency and other adverse aspects of the refugee condition, *calls* on States, UNHCR and other concerned actors to make renewed efforts to ensure that the rights, needs and dignity of elderly refugee are fully respected and addressed through appropriate programme activities;

UNHCR action. See: *Older Refugees: Looking Beyond the International Year of Older Persons (EC/50/SC/CRP.8)*, presented to the seventeenth meeting of the Standing Committee (February/March 2000); *Note on International Protection (A/AC.96/930)*, presented to the eighteenth meeting of the Standing Committee (July 2000); *Report of the Seventeenth Meeting of the Standing Committee*

(A/AC.96/929, Annex I), presented to the eighteenth meeting of the Standing Committee (July 2000); and *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (E/2000/18), presented to the 2000 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(q) *Recalls* United Nations Security Council resolution S/RES/1208 (1998); *remains* gravely preoccupied with the continuing occurrence of military or armed attacks and other threats to the security of refugees, including the infiltration of armed elements in refugee camps and settlements; *re-emphasizes* the responsibility of States, working, where appropriate, with UNHCR in collaboration with each other and with other parts of the UN system, to uphold the civilian and humanitarian character and to ensure the security of refugee camps and settlements, *inter-alia*, by identifying and separating armed elements from refugee populations and settling refugees in secure locations; and *encourages* States and UNHCR, in collaboration with each other and with other parts of the United Nations system, to continue their efforts to enhance the security and civilian nature of refugee camps and settlements;

UNHCR action. See: *The Security, Civilian and Humanitarian Character of Refugee Camps and Settlements: Operationalizing the "Ladder of Options"* (EC/50/SC/INF.4) and *Note on International Protection* (A/AC.96/930), presented to the eighteenth meeting of the Standing Committee (July 2000); and *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (E/2000/18), presented to the 2000 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

(s) *Notes* with concern the persistence of statelessness problems; *welcomes* the accession of Chad to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, as well as the accession of St Vincent and the Grenadines and Zimbabwe to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons; and *encourages* UNHCR to continue to promote further accessions to and full implementation of both instruments by the States concerned;

UNHCR action. See: *Note on International Protection* (A/AC.96/930), presented to the eighteenth meeting of the Standing Committee (July 2000); and *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (E/2000/18), presented to the 2000 Substantive Session of ECOSOC.

para. 21 Conclusion on the Protection of the Refugee's Family

(c) *Calls* upon States, UNHCR and other relevant actors to give particular attention to the needs of unaccompanied refugee children pending their reunification with their families; and *affirms*, in this regard, that adoption of refugee children should only be considered when all feasible steps for family tracing and reunification have been exhausted, and then only in the best interests of the child and in conformity with international standards.

UNHCR action. See: *Refugee Children and Adolescents: a Progress Report* (EC/50/SC/CRP.7), presented to the seventeenth meeting of the Standing Committee (February/March 2000); *Note on International Protection* (A/AC.96/930), presented to the eighteenth meeting of the Standing Committee (July 2000); *Mid-Year Progress Report*, presented to the nineteenth meeting of

the Standing Committee (September 2000); and Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (E/2000/18), presented to the 2000 Substantive Session of ECOSOC;

para. 22 Conclusion on the CIS Conference Follow-up

(k) Urges the High Commissioner to continue to inform the public and further to enhance relationships with other key international actors, such as the Council of Europe, the European Commission and other human rights, development and financial institutions;

(n) Requests the High Commissioner to keep the Executive Committee informed of measures taken in the implementation of the Programme of Action and of progress achieved on the issue of follow-up to the CIS Conference.

UNHCR action. See: *Mid-Year Progress Report*, presented to the nineteenth meeting of the Standing Committee (September 2000); *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (E/2000/18)*, presented to the 2000 Substantive Session of ECOSOC; and *Report and Recommendations for Follow-up to the Regional Conference to Address the Problems of Refugees, Displaced Persons, Other Forms of Involuntary Displacement and Returnees in the Countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Relevant Neighbouring States (CISCONF/2000/SG5/3)*, presented to the fifth meeting of the Steering Group (July 2000).

para. 23 General Decision on Administrative,
Financial and Programme Matters

(d) Notes the Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the year ended 31 December 1998 (A/AC.96/917), and the Measures taken or proposed in response to the recommendations of the Report of the Board of Auditors by the High Commissioner (A/AC.96/917/Add.1); as well as the Report of the ACABQ on UNHCR's Annual Programme Budget for the year 2000 (A/AC.96/916/Add.2), the Report of UNHCR's Inspection Activities (A/AC.96/918) and the Report on UNHCR's Evaluation Activities (A/AC.96/919), and requests to be kept regularly informed on the measures taken to address the recommendations and the observations raised in these various oversight documents;

UNHCR action. See: *Follow-up on the Actions Taken to Implement the Recommendations of the Board of Auditors on its Report for the Year Ended 31 December 1998 (EC/50/SC/CRP.20)*, presented to the nineteenth meeting of the Standing Committee (September 2000).

(e) Requests the High Commissioner, within the resources available, to respond flexibly and efficiently to the needs currently indicated under the Annual Programme Budget for the year 2000 and as set out in the Global Appeal, and authorizes her, in the case of additional new emergency needs that cannot be met fully from the Operational Reserve, to issue Special Appeals and create Supplementary Programmes;

UNHCR action. See: *Overall Programme and Funding in 1999 and Projections for 2000 (EC/50/SC/CRP.3)*, presented to the seventeenth meeting of the Standing Committee (February/March 2000); *Overall Programme and Funding Projections*

for 2000 (EC/50/SC/CRP.19) and Global Report 1999, presented to the eighteenth meeting of the Standing Committee (July 2000); and UNHCR Annual Programme Budget (A/AC.96/932) and Mid-Year Progress Report, presented to the nineteenth meeting of the Standing Committee (September 2000). See also related documentation: Report of the Seventeenth Meeting of the Standing Committee (A/AC.96/929); Report of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee (A/AC.96/939); and Report of the Nineteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee (A/AC.96/943).